

Other demersal active hunters

Research of Ducrotoy et al. (2000) shows that on the slope edge, in the Northern North sea, demersal fish are dominated by saithe (*Pollachius virens*) and haddock *Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), both representing more

than half of the fish biomass there. Norway pout (*Trisopterus esmarkii*) occurs also in the most Northern parts of the North Sea (Ducrotoy et al., 2000). To map the role and diet of the active hunters in the North Sea and Wadden Sea food web, the distinction between pelagic and demersal active hunters is crucial to this research. As the definition of active hunter includes things such as searching for potential food sources, all species in this background information report are considered migratory by nature. Not much is known about non-native species within this group, and thus this study was not able to identify species that could be considered non-native or invasive.



History/population trends

Research from Wares & Cunningham (2001) shows that genes from demersal species that require rocky intertidal substrate, such as the common sea star and several crabs, in the current population date back to before the last glacial maximum, around 20,000 years ago. This indicates that benthic life in European waters has hardly changed in the last ten thousand years (Wares & Cunningham, 2001). Almost all species within this group have also played only minor roles in human history (Clausen et al., 2017; Wares & Cunningham, 2001).

North Sea vs. Wadden Sea

The Wadden Sea is home to a large number of benthic shellfish, worms and crustacea (Brinkman et al., 2002). The blue mussel (*Mytilus edulis*) for example, a filter feeding shellfish, is one of the key species in the Wadden Sea ecosystem and therefore prey to a large proportion of the predators (Brinkman et al., 2002). Many migratory birds preferably feed upon *M. edulis* (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018).

Diet

- Annelida (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Sandeel (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Crustaceans (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Other detritivores (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Bivalves (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Cephalopods (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Sprat (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Herring (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Starfish (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Flatfish (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Small fish (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Cannibalism (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)
- Other pelagic active hunters (Brinkman et al., 2002; St-Pierre et al., 2018)

Sources

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